(c) what has been its effect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN): (a) to (c) With the harvesting of a bumper crop of raw jute this season, prices have declined to support level in almost all up-country markets. The Jute Corporation of India, in association with State Co-operatives, is purchasing raw jute at minimum statutory prices fixed by the Government on a massive scale and has made record purchases of over 15 lakh bales as on 18th November, 1985. Further purchases are in progress. The Jute Corporation of India is also using mass media to advise the farmers not to make distress sale at prices below the statutory minimum to unscrupulous traders and bring their produce to JCI|Co-operative purchase centres.

Purchase of raw jute by Jute Corporation of India

1138. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) how much raw jute the Jute Corporation of India purchased till 7th November, 1985;

(b) how much raw jute was purchased by the Corporation during the corresponding period last year; and

(c) what steps the Jute Corporation of India has taken to make additional purchase in veiw of the distress sale of raw jute?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI KHURSHID ALAM KHAN): (a) and (b) The jute Corporation of India, in association with State Cooperatives, purchased about 12.5 lakh bales of raw jute till 7th November, 1985 as against 7.31 lakh bales purchased during the corresponding period last year.

(c) The JCI in association with State Cooperatives, continuing procurement of raw jute at minimum statutory prices fixed by the Government on a more massive scale than ever before.

Import of coconut oil

1139. SHRI N. E. BALRAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that coconut oil is being imported even now;

(b) if so. the month-wise details of the imports made during the current year and by whom;

(c) whether Government are aware that the prices of coconut oil in the domestic market have fallen steeply because of such imports; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken to curtail its imports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) No, Sir.*

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Due to drought conditions and other factors there was low crop of coconut during 1983-84 with the result that the prices were abnormally high. About 9,000 M.T. of coconut oil was imported by STC in April, 1984 to relieve the pressure on price. This was one time import and no further import is contemplated.

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*NOTE.—Direct import of coconut oil is permitted for export production against Replenishment/Advance/ Imprest licences. The quantity of import under this category is negligeble.